



Senate Energy Panel Approves Feinstein-Boxer Resolution to Ensure Continued Public Access to Santa Rosa Island

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Washington, DC – The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee today unanimously approved a measure sponsored by U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer (both D-Calif.) to ensure continued public access to Santa Rosa Island. The island is part of the Channel Islands National Park, located off the coast of Santa Barbara, California.

“The Senate Energy Committee today approved a measure that would help ensure that American taxpayers have continued access to one of California’s treasured recreational destinations – Santa Rosa Island,” Senator Feinstein said. **“Santa Rosa Island is a critical refuge for rare and endangered species, such as the bald eagle and the Santa Rosa Island fox, and the site of important local archaeological discoveries.**

“Senator Boxer and I will do everything we can to ensure that the National Parks Services is allowed to enforce its rules and regulations to protect this natural landmark. We believe that Santa Rosa Island belongs to the American public – and should not be aside as a private hunting reserve for only wealthy trophy hunters and members of the military and veterans to enjoy.”

“The beauty of Santa Rosa Island belongs to all Americans as part of our National Park system. I am pleased the Committee passed the Feinstein-Boxer resolution to ensure that public access to the island is not restricted. I will continue to work with Senator Feinstein and Congresswoman Capps to keep this natural treasure open to the public,” Senator Boxer said.

The Feinstein-Boxer resolution approved by the Senate Energy Committee today would ensure that the National Park Service is allowed to properly manage and administer Santa Rosa Island in accordance with its policies and regulations. The measure will now go before the full Senate for approval.

Senators Feinstein and Boxer introduced the resolution in response to a provision included in the House approved 2007 Defense Authorization bill, which would effectively limit public access to the island. The provision, sponsored by House Armed Services Committee Chairman Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.), would extend the current practice of allowing privately organized deer and elk hunting expeditions. These hunts require the closure of about 90% of the

island to the general public for about 4-5 months each year. The measure would also prevent the National Park Service from carrying out a court-approved settlement to remove non-native deer and elk from Santa Rosa Island by 2011. The deer and elk herds pose a threat to the island's 11 endangered species, including the bald eagle, rare plants, and native fox.

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